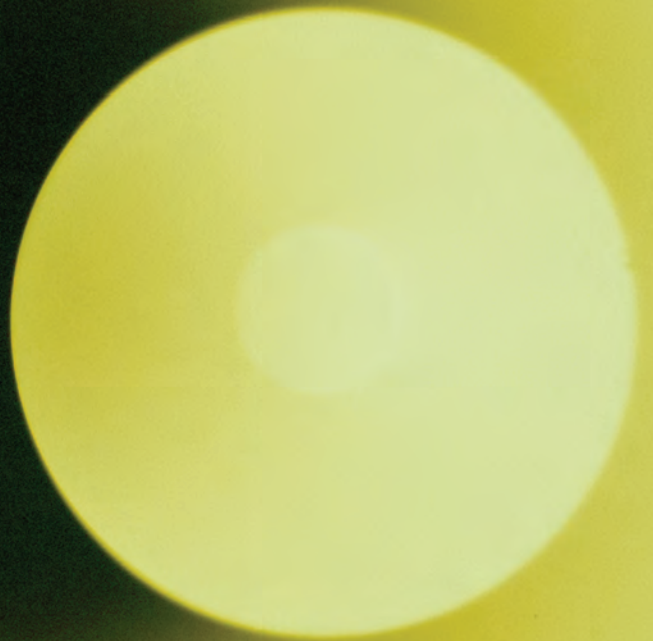


# *The* **CORE**

**THE COLLEGE  
MAGAZINE**

Summer 2020 Supplement to  
The University of Chicago Magazine



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Operations  
matrices

1) Addition

$$A = (a_{ij})$$

$$B = (b_{ij})$$

Then

$$A + B = ($$

$M_{n \times m}$  is

$$(A + B) + C$$

$$\exists 0: (A + 0) = A$$

During Spring Quarter, assistant professor Daniil Rudenko used a lightboard in his linear algebra lectures, creating the impression that he was writing directly on his students' screens.

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**Front cover:** Photography by **Adam Nadel**, AB'90.

**Back cover:** Screenshot by **Sage Rossman**, Class of 2023.

From the editor

## WASH YOUR HANDS

In early April, after the University had closed and the grief was still fresh, I interviewed **Ada Palmer**, associate professor of early modern European history, about plagues. COVID-19, she explained, is "the first pandemic humanity has faced while fully understanding how disease works and how sanitation works."

As recently as the flu pandemic of 1918, people didn't understand either one. Even handwashing was controversial: "A lot of physicians were offended by the idea, because it implies they themselves were carrying the contagion. There was ferocious opposition."

In "Early Spread" (page 23), **Sage Rossman**, Class of 2023, the daughter of a doctor and a nurse, writes of her parents' frustration with the poorly reviewed research published in the first weeks of the pandemic. "If you have any research you've been waiting to submit, now would be the time," they jokingly advised **Rossman**, who wants to major in neuroscience and biology.

Five months later, knowledge has begun to coalesce. Masks: yes. Social distancing: yes. Aerosol transmission: probably. The speed of understanding is slow compared to what we would prefer, but without precedent in the history of disease.

"As a historian who's used to a multicentury timescale, I'm in awe," **Palmer** said back in April. "We're seeing the fruits of centuries of teamwork in science. This pandemic is going to be terrible, but so much less terrible, thanks to that cumulative multicentury human teamwork."

—**Carrie Golus**, AB'91, AM'93

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**THE CORE** • Supplement to the Summer 2020 issue of the University of Chicago Magazine

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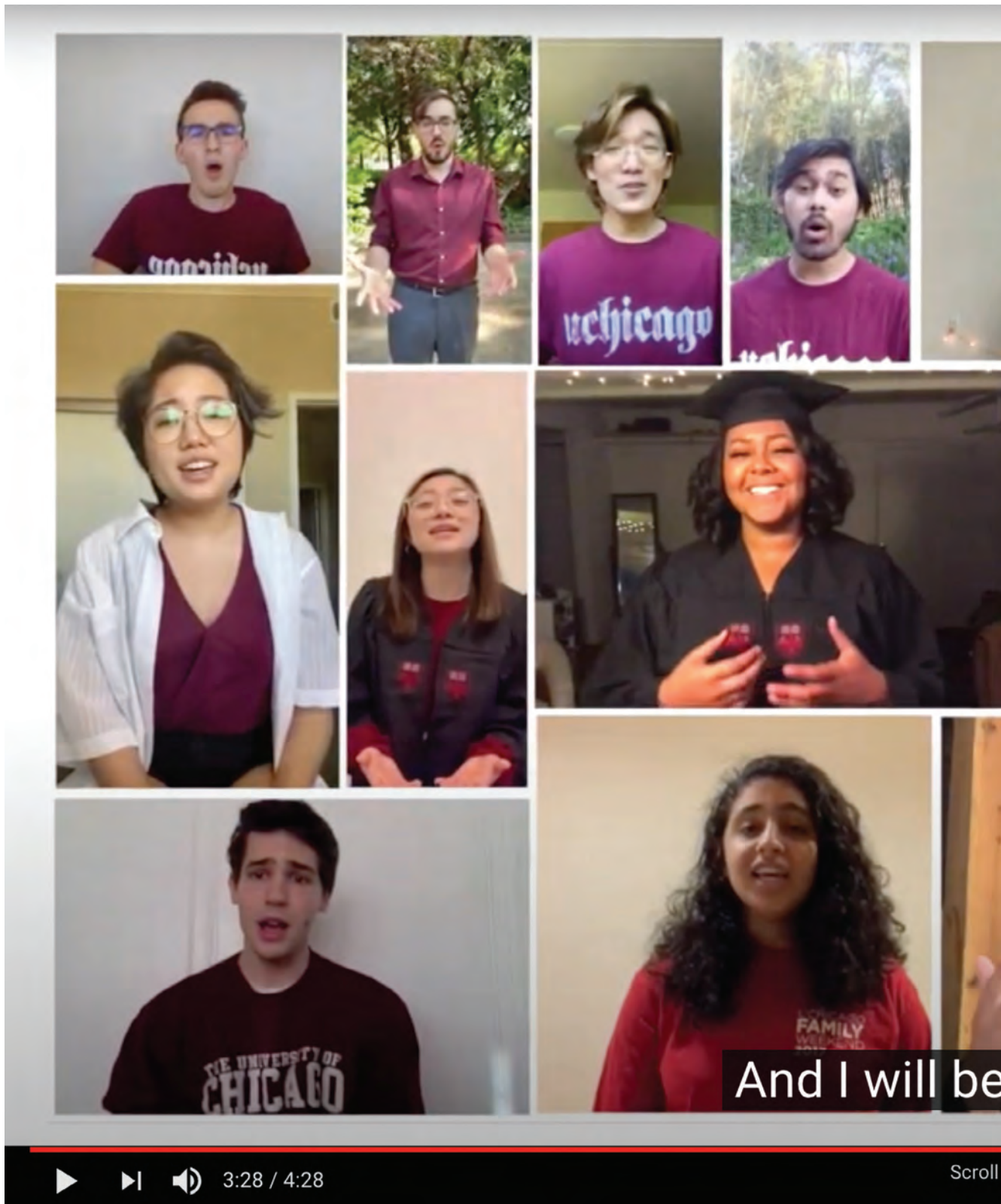
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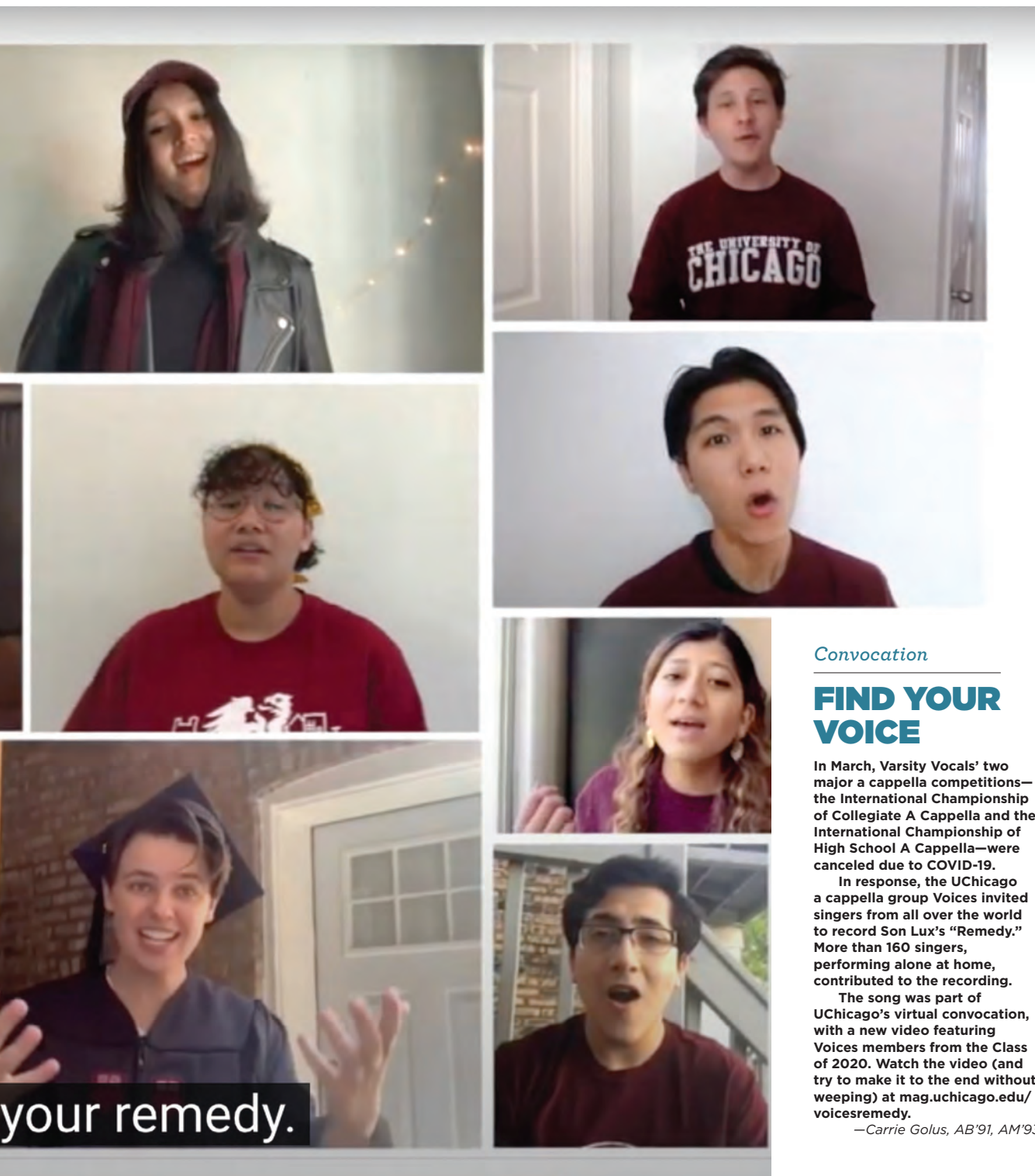
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The Core is published twice a year as a supplement to the *University of Chicago Magazine* by the University of Chicago.  
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### Convocation

## FIND YOUR VOICE

In March, Varsity Vocals' two major a cappella competitions—the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella and the International Championship of High School A Cappella—were canceled due to COVID-19.

In response, the UChicago a cappella group Voices invited singers from all over the world to record Son Lux's "Remedy." More than 160 singers, performing alone at home, contributed to the recording.

The song was part of UChicago's virtual convocation, with a new video featuring Voices members from the Class of 2020. Watch the video (and try to make it to the end without weeping) at [mag.uchicago.edu/voicesremedy](http://mag.uchicago.edu/voicesremedy).

—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93

or details





## Recipe

# SO YOU'VE BAKED YOUR OWN BREAD. NOW WHAT?

*This blueberry jam with mint keeps summer in a jar.*

**Madelaine Bullwinkel**, AM'68, has been teaching cooking in her Hinsdale, Illinois, kitchen since 1977. Her cookbook *Gourmet Preserves Chez Madelaine* (Contemporary Books) first came out in 1984, "at a time when people were getting into gardening again," she says, "and when small quantity food preserving was an idea that seemed—pardon the expression—ripe."

The book was reissued in 2005, then again in 2017 under the hipper title *Artisanal Preserves: Small-Batch Jams, Jellies, Marmalades, and More* (Surrey Books). Bullwinkel has a new title too: "cyber chef." In May she began teaching a series of Zoom classes for alumni on egg basics, egg yolks, and egg whites.

The recipes in *Artisanal Preserves* include some unusual combinations: tomato prune jam, rhubarb fig jam, rosemary red onion jelly, lime zucchini marmalade, ratatouille marmalade. Less esoteric is blueberry jam with mint, which brings together two flavors of summer. When Bullwinkel has taught this recipe, she says, "people go bananas over it."

—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93

*Read an interview with Bullwinkel on page 23 of the Summer/20 issue of the University of Chicago Magazine.*

## Blueberry Jam with Mint

**Yield:** 5 cups

*2 pounds fresh blueberries*

*½ cup water*

*2 tablespoons lemon juice*

*2 cups sugar*

*4 6-inch sprigs fresh mint*

**Pick over the berries, rinse, and combine with water in a heavy nonreactive 5-quart pan. Cover and bring mixture to a boil. Simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.**

**Add lemon juice, then begin adding sugar ½ cup at a time, allowing the mixture to regain the boil before adding more. Let jam boil for 5 minutes.**

**Pour the jam into a 2-quart measure. Submerge the mint sprigs tied with twine, crushing them against the sides and bottom of the container. Let them steep for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove the mint.**

**Fill hot sterilized jars to within ½ inch of the lips. Wipe rims clean, attach new lids, and screw caps on tightly. Invert the hot jars momentarily for a quick seal, or process in a boiling water bath, submerged by 1 inch, for 10 minutes.**

*Reprinted with permission from Artisanal Preserves: Small-Batch Jams, Jellies, Marmalades, and More by Madelaine Bullwinkel, Agate Surrey, June 2017.*



**The newborn bison and its mother. Bison calves are protected not only by their mothers but also the entire herd.**





*UChicago creature*

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BISON

Fermilab's first bison calf of the year was born on April 28—one of 13 calves born so far this season. The American bison (*Bison bison*) roam nearly 1,000 acres of reconstructed tallgrass prairie at Fermilab, about an hour's drive west of Hyde Park in the suburb of Batavia, Illinois.

The herd was established by Robert Wilson, Fermilab's first director, in 1969. The display herd honors the historic Midwest prairie, as well as the lab's "pioneering research at the frontiers of particle physics."

—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93



## BLOC STARS

*A course on the Eurovision Song Contest analyzes the politics along with the pop.*

**Philip Bohlman** has been teaching a course on the Eurovision Song Contest since 2004, but this year's class is unlike any other. Due to COVID-19, his students have scattered. Eurovision itself has been canceled.

One aspect of college normalcy remains in the 2020 edition of Music 23509. It's a 9:30 a.m. class, and the students aren't pleased. Assembled via Zoom from their basements, living rooms, and childhood bedrooms, they engage in ritual grousing. The clear winner of the I-have-it-worse-than-you contest is an Arizonan, for whom class begins at 7:30 a.m. East Coasters, the students agree, have "time zone privilege."

Another bit of continuity: even amid a global crisis, it is impossible for a course on the Eurovision Song Contest not to feel a little bit fun. (For Eurovision newbies: participating countries submit an original three-minute song to the annual contest, then vote on each other's entries. The organizers take an expansive view of Europe—Israel joined in 1973, Australia in 2015. These days, many songs are in English.)

Bohlman and his course assistants, **Eva Pensis** and **Laura Shearing Turner**, PhD'20, have made a few concessions to circumstance. Usually, the class concludes with a student-organized Eurovision-esque song contest. These performances have developed "a real reputation on campus," Bohlman, the Ludwig Rosenberger Distinguished Service Professor in Jewish History and the Department of Music, tells me later. "**John Boyer** [AM'69, PhD'75] came one year."

This year each student is creating a scripted podcast about a fictional song contest of their own devising; the podcasts will include several

original songs as "entries." The theme and sound are up to the student. As the syllabus notes, "you may draw from the repertoires that are dear to your heart."

For today's late-April session, focused on the theme of stardom and whether there is "life after Eurovision" for performers, Bohlman has selected a Eurovision song dear to *his* heart: Ireland's 1987 winning entry, "Hold Me Now," performed by Johnny Logan. (Logan was born in Australia but grew up in Ireland—a kind of fluidity of nationality that's not unusual. Canadian Celine Dion, relatively unknown at the time, sang Switzerland's winning song in 1988.)

Bohlman's interest in the contest dates back to graduate school in the 1980s. While doing research in Israel for his dissertation, Bohlman began playing chamber music with a group of older European emigrés and exiles. One Saturday evening, they told him, "We're not playing chamber music tonight. We're going to watch the Eurovision Song Contest." They were "very formal people, highly educated—I didn't even know they had TVs," Bohlman recalls. Still, they watched Eurovision "as if this were a sacred service."

Like most Americans at the time, Bohlman had not heard of Eurovision. Those who had mostly knew it

*Even amid a global crisis, it is impossible for a course on the Eurovision Song Contest not to feel a little bit fun.*

"I chose this for two reasons," Bohlman says. First, "I kind of like it, for all its embarrassment." Second, it represents the tail end of "old" Eurovision, dominated by an old-fashioned orchestral sound.

Like many Eurovision songs before and after, "Hold Me Now" features a surging chorus, a bridge that arrives exactly when you want it to, a sneakily beautiful melody, and utterly deranged fashion. Logan's outfit falls somewhere between a white tuxedo and a chef's uniform. "I've never seen anyone, anywhere, in any country wear a jumpsuit like that," Bohlman says.

through ABBA: "Waterloo," which won in 1974, launched the band into global superstardom. For them, at least, there was life after Eurovision.

Johnny Logan wasn't quite so lucky, Bohlman notes in his lecture. He is the only person to have won the contest twice, in 1980 and 1987 ("Mr. Eurovision" also composed the winning song in 1992), but he never really transcended it.

Logan's "Hold Me Now" represents not only an old Eurovision but also an old Europe. "Clearly this comes from a different era," Bohlman tells the students. Other songs from the



Anni-Frid Lyngstad and Agnetha Fältskog of ABBA perform their winning song "Waterloo" at the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest.

1987 contest sound more firmly '80s, rhythmic and synth driven, than the violin-drenched "Hold Me Now." These sonic transformations anticipated political transformations to come: "This is two years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, when Europe will undergo a considerable change itself."

Despite Eurovision's reputation for frivolity, politics have been baked in since its creation. The contest began in 1956 in part as an implicitly anti-Soviet demonstration of Western European unity, and many songs contain pointed political messages in the guise of pop songs: Ukraine's 2016 entry "1944" references Russia's historic and ongoing invasions, while "Face the Shadow" (2015) confronts the Armenian genocide.

Australian Dami Im, who was born in South Korea, represents a very different Eurovision. Course assistant Pensis queues up the music video for "Sound of Silence" (2016), in which dancers writhe in a smoke-filled warehouse to an impeccably

produced, lyrically questionable pop song. (Sample line, sung slowly and sincerely: "Growing tired and weary brown eyes / Trying to feel your love through FaceTime.")

"Hold Me Now" and "Sound of Silence" are structurally "exactly the same," Bohlman says. Both are in A-A-B-A form, with key changes at identical points in the song. Yet for all their similarities, "they couldn't be more different in what they're trying to do," he says. "Logan is maybe a bit outside his historical moment. Dami Im is very much in her historical moment."

With that, Bohlman concludes his lecture and Pensis and Shearing divide the students into small groups for discussion. I follow Pensis into group three, where she asks the students what makes a good Eurovision song. "Very inspirational songs, with really big themes of love and peace," one student suggests. "Big, fun, catchy hooks," another adds.

The group mulls the question of why ever more songs are sung in

English and what it means when they aren't. "At what point does speaking in your native tongue become a cause?" Pensis prompts.

Ukraine's "1944" included a few lines in Crimean—something that likely worked to its strategic advantage, one canny student points out. "It probably wouldn't have generated as much press as it did without that." After all, it is a contest, and countries are trying to win.

When small group discussion concludes, the class reassembles. Bohlman notes a few housekeeping items: upcoming assignments, office hours.

Finally, he urges students to keep listening to as many Eurovision songs as they can. "Every night or so listen to a couple of songs from a particular year," he says, "so you can get the sounds in your ears." It makes for a delightful homework assignment.

—Susie Allen, AB'09



## Books

# THE STORIES SHE WANTED TO READ

*Growing up, author Samira Ahmed, AB'93, MAT'93, never read a book with a Muslim protagonist. Now she's written three.*

~~~~~  
**@sam\_aye\_ahm:** *She wants to make films & kiss boys--her Muslim parents forbid both. Will a terrorist & Islamophobia shatter her dreams? #pitmatch #YA #CON*

**@ericsmithrocks:** *\*breaks mouse clicking like button so hard\**  
~~~~~

**Samira Ahmed, AB'93, MAT'93,** worked on her manuscript "Swimming Lessons" for seven years, off and on. Mostly off. "I wasn't even sure how to start," she says. "I would just—as all writers do—procrastinate by doing research on how to write a book."

She didn't like any of the advice she read: cloud diagrams, outlining. Finally she tried writing her idea as a short story. Set at an Indian wedding, that story became part of the first chapter of a "sprawling" 120,000-word manuscript.

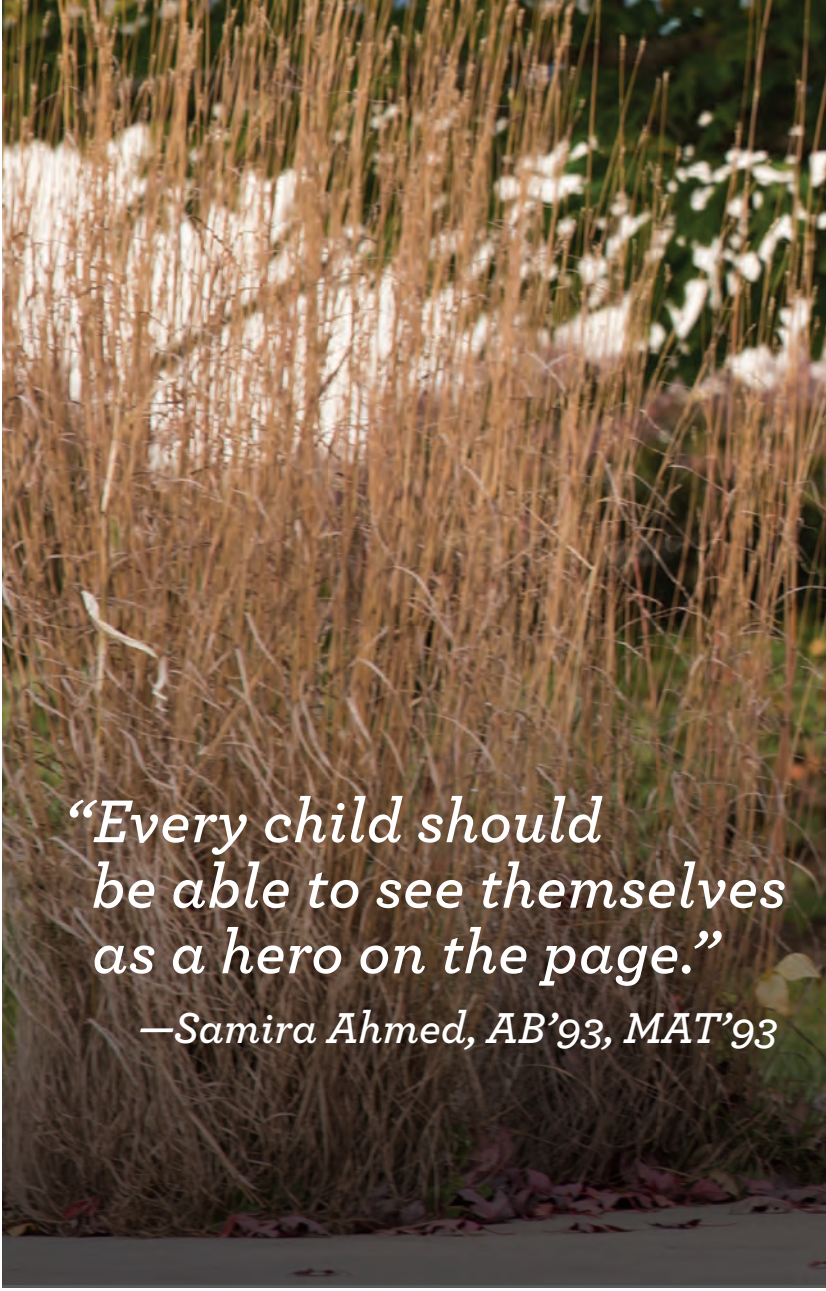
Ahmed's novel centers on 17-year-old Maya Aziz, the only Muslim girl in her Batavia, Illinois, high school. She has a secret boyfriend, as well as an acceptance letter to film school that her parents don't know about. The family conflict is set against a background of rising Islamophobia.

In 2016, with a trimmed-down manuscript, Ahmed entered Pit Match, a Twitter contest that connected aspiring authors with agents; four

days later, she was signed. Her young adult (YA) novel, published as *Love, Hate & Other Filters* (Soho Teen, 2018), was on the *New York Times* best-seller list in less than a month.

Now that Ahmed has found a writing practice that works for her, she's published two more YA books in two years. "I write a short story first. That's my treatment," she says. "I write a story around the protagonist, try to get a couple other main characters in there, and see if I like where this could go. Do I like that character and world enough to write 70,000 or 80,000 words or more?"

Her second book, *Internment* (Little, Brown, 2019), explores similar themes as the first, but it's set in a bleaker world. After the election of an Islamophobic president, Muslims are rounded up and sent to an internment camp. The protagonist, Layla Amin, rebels against her new circumstances—disregarding the objections of her parents and some camp inmates, who just want to survive. *Internment* was named one of the best books of 2019 by *Kirkus Reviews*, which described the book's setting as "a Trump-like America" and categorized it as "realistic fiction."



*"Every child should be able to see themselves as a hero on the page."*

*—Samira Ahmed, AB'93, MAT'93*





This year Ahmed published her third book, *Mad, Bad & Dangerous to Know* (Soho Teen). The title, as contemporary as it sounds, comes from a description of Lord Byron by one of his spurned lovers.

The narration alternates between Khayyam Maquet, a French American teenager spending the summer in Paris in the present day, and Leila, struggling to survive in a harem 200 years earlier. The book draws on research Ahmed did more than 25 years ago for her bachelor's thesis, which examined Byron's poetry in the context of Napoleon's conquest of Egypt.

One of the poems Ahmed analyzed was "The Giaour." In the poem Leila, a member of a harem, is thrown into the ocean in a sack as punishment for infidelity. Although the poem is long and features multiple points of view, Leila "literally has no voice in the story at all," Ahmed says. In *Mad, Bad & Dangerous to Know*, she finally gets her voice.

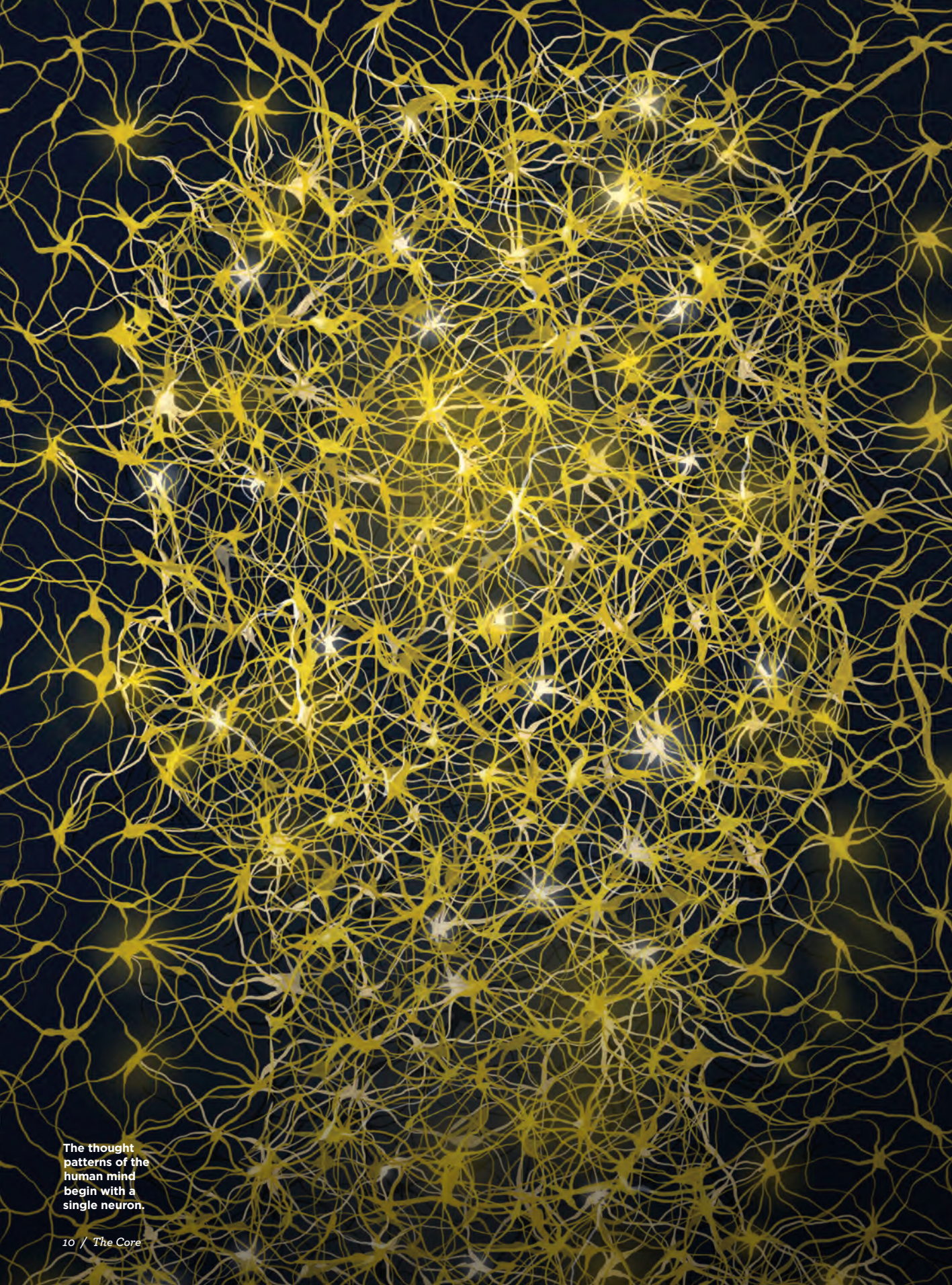
Growing up Ahmed never read a single book with a Muslim protagonist. "Every child should be able to see themselves as a hero on the page," she says. "The first time I felt like I saw myself in a book—that wasn't written by an Indian in Hindi or Urdu and

then translated—was Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*." Multiple stories in the collection, published in 1999, made Ahmed think, "Yes, this is a piece of me here."

After graduating from UChicago, Ahmed taught high school, first in the Chicago suburbs, then in New York. "I just love those teen years. It's such an interesting group to teach and to write for," she says. "Teens are really on the threshold between childhood and adulthood—a liminal space, a space that has hope in it. I naturally am a writer who leans into hope."

—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93





The thought  
patterns of the  
human mind  
begin with a  
single neuron.



## EMERGENCE AS THE NEXT BIG THING

*Abraham Herzog-Arbeitman, SB'19, SM'19, makes a \$26,000 suggestion.*

In February the National Science Foundation announced the winners of the first-ever NSF 2026 Idea Machine, a competition to help set the US agenda for fundamental research in science; engineering; and STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Anyone aged 14 or older—from the scientific community, industry, nonprofits, the public—could submit an idea.

Of the 800 entries, the NSF chose four grand prize winners, awarding \$26,000 to each. (Of course “the real prize,” the press release stated, was “the opportunity to promote the progress of science and engineering by helping NSF identify possible new areas of research.”) Among the grand prize winners was the submission “Emergence: Complexity from the Bottom Up,” by then-undergrad **Abraham Herzog-Arbeitman**, SB'19, SM'19, now a graduate student in organic chemistry at MIT.

“I should note that emergence is not my idea, nor is it a new idea,” Herzog-Arbeitman explained by email. “My contribution was to expand interest in this approach to understanding complex systems at this unique point in time,” when increased computing power has made sophisticated simulations possible.

A month after the Idea Machine winners were announced, the University made its own announcement: Spring Quarter would be remote. “Yes, emergence is extremely relevant in Coronatime,” Herzog-Arbeitman wrote. “Pandemics are emergent phenomena, as are herd immunity and viral interactions with the human body.”

A better understanding of emergence, he continued, could have helped policy makers give clearer advice to the public, distribute food and personal protective equipment more efficiently, and manage societal effects like unemployment. “Of course, these systems are a long way from being understood. But we can move beyond simple model systems now, so ... progress.” Here is the full text of Herzog-Arbeitman's entry.

—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93

*“Emergence is extremely relevant in Coronatime. Pandemics are emergent phenomena, as are herd immunity and viral interactions with the human body.”*

—Abraham Herzog-Arbeitman

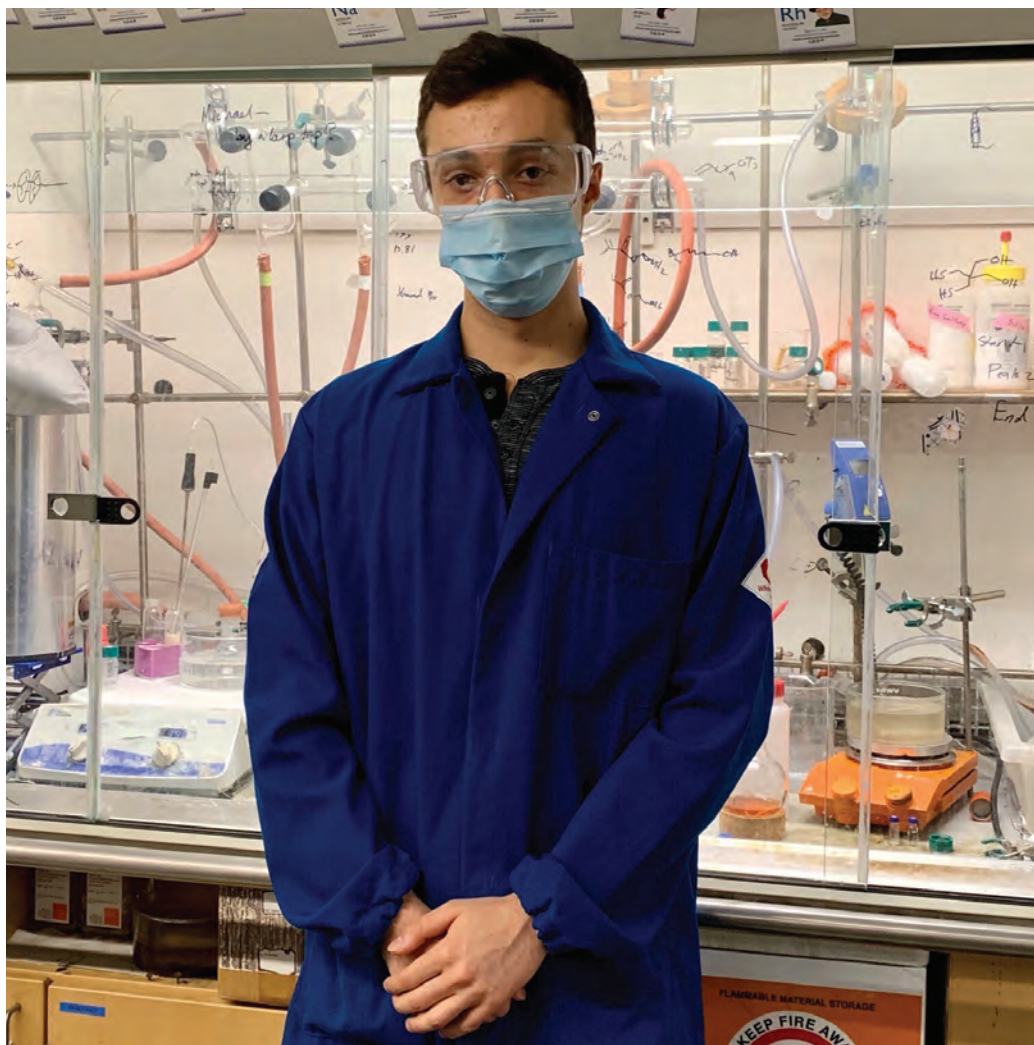
### Emergence: Complexity from the Bottom Up

By Abraham Herzog-Arbeitman

The intricate design of a snowflake, a school of fish swimming in unison, the thought patterns of a human mind. Each of these are complex systems that began with something simple—a water molecule, a minnow, a single neuron. As groups of these elements interact, a complex structure unfolds with new characteristics. Out of chaos, a sophisticated order seems suddenly to emerge without effort or guidance. But this is far from chance. It is an efficient and versatile process prevalent throughout nature known as emergence—a phenomenon that describes how simple components interact to form elaborate things.

Emergence is found wherever complexity is. It is a process relevant to all the sciences and the humanities—as prominent in computing or cryptography as it is in predicting traffic patterns or viral videos. Virtually every intricacy in our world depends upon emergence, and evidence suggests that these complex systems rely on it in a similar way. That means that the more we understand how emergence works, the more we can understand and influence all kinds of elaborate systems. Ultimately, harnessing emergent design could help us





Herzog-Arbeitman in the lab at MIT, where he is a graduate student in organic chemistry.

create our own complex systems or behaviors with the same efficiency as nature.

This deeper understanding of emergence promises far-reaching impacts for science and society. It could help us to influence economic trends or to untangle the cellular interactions that lead to cancer. The efficiency of emergent design is especially useful when creating ordered systems affected by limited resources. For example, energy grids, postal services, factories, and waste-management plants could all be designed to produce more and waste less. Entire cities could be planned with greater efficiency, inviting a new era of urban design inspired, ironically, by nature.

To predict the complex behavior of emergent systems, we must understand how their components communicate and interact with each other over time. This may require analyzing massive amounts of data. Like many modern research ideas, advancements in machine learning and supercomputing stand

to greatly enhance our study of emergence, making now an optimal time to explore this idea and to build on existing efforts.

Perhaps more than any other research question, the study of emergence has interdisciplinarity at its core. Researchers must work across scientific and social disciplines to gather and compare examples of emergent systems, helping them to understand their common elements and to develop a unified vocabulary for describing them. Through this careful but universal lens, we can begin to extract general design principles that could be applied to various fields and societal priorities.

As our challenges grow more and more complex, so too must our solutions and our understanding of complexity itself. Fortunately, in nature we have a blueprint for complexity that is both efficient and effective, promising new emergent solutions for challenges of every kind.

## Excerpt

# ADDRESS BOOK

*The City in a Garden looks at the “place-ness” of Hyde Park history.*

**John Mark Hansen**, the Charles L. Hutchinson Distinguished Service Professor in Political Science and the College, has called Hyde Park home for more than 30 years. He’s an avid cyclist who hosts two annual bicycle tours of the South Side with Dean John W. Boyer, AM’69, PhD’75.

*The City in a Garden: A Guide to the History of Hyde Park and Kenwood* (Chicago Studies, 2019) is like a book version of these tours. Here are a few stops on the tour.

—Carrie Golus, AB’91, AM’93

## The City in a Garden

By John Mark Hansen

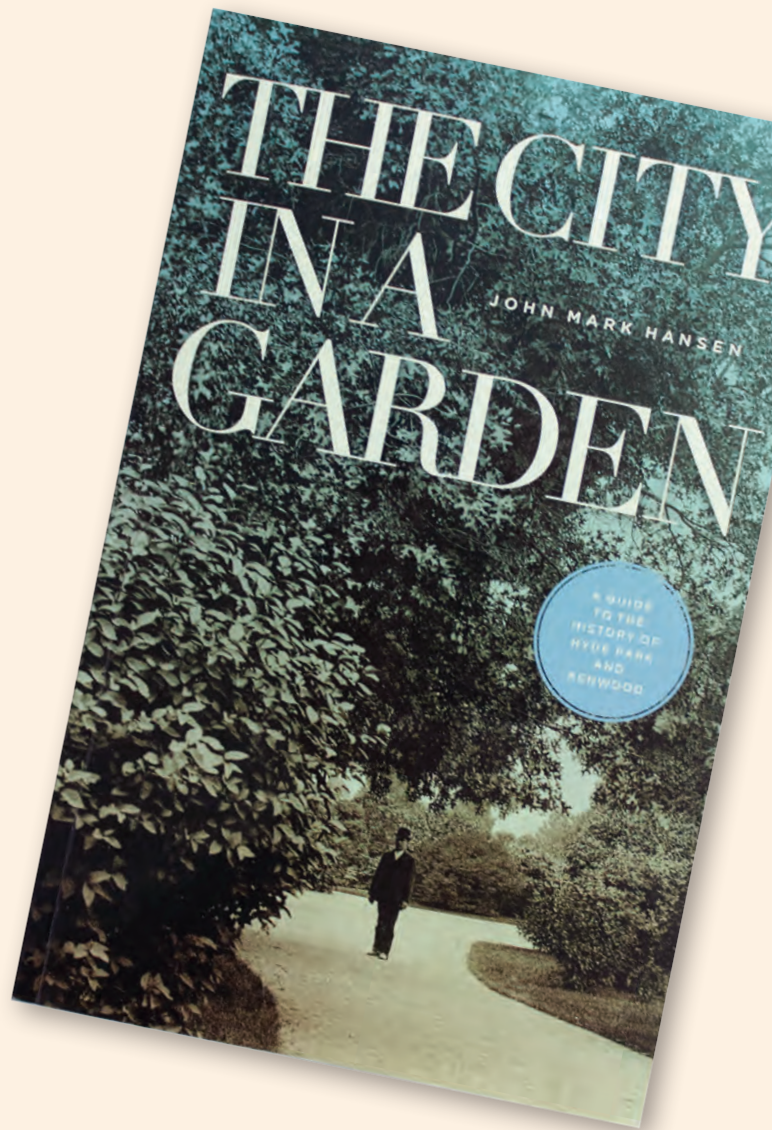
How do you chronicle a time and a place?

My choice to tell the story of the community through the stories of individuals rests on the claim that people (our forebears and ourselves included) do not live narratives; instead, they live experiences. Each of the articles in this book links an incident or a person to a precise location, often a specific address. In many cases, I have gone to considerable trouble to identify them. In doing so, I mean to emphasize the “place-ness” of our history.

## At the Beach

In July 1913, the Jackson Park beach censor, Walter Straight (5490 Ellis), arrested Dr. Rosalie M. Ladova (1370 E. 57th) on a charge of disorderly conduct. At the beach at 58th by the old German Pavilion, Ladova entered the water, doffed her skirt, and commenced to swim in bloomers. Officer Straight rowed out to her and demanded that she put on her skirt, as required by city ordinance. She replied that she would, as soon as she finished swimming.

At the Hyde Park Municipal Court, Judge William M. Gremmill (5406 Ellis) dismissed the charge. “Dr. Ladova’s suit was quite modest,” he said. “No one but a prude could object to it.”

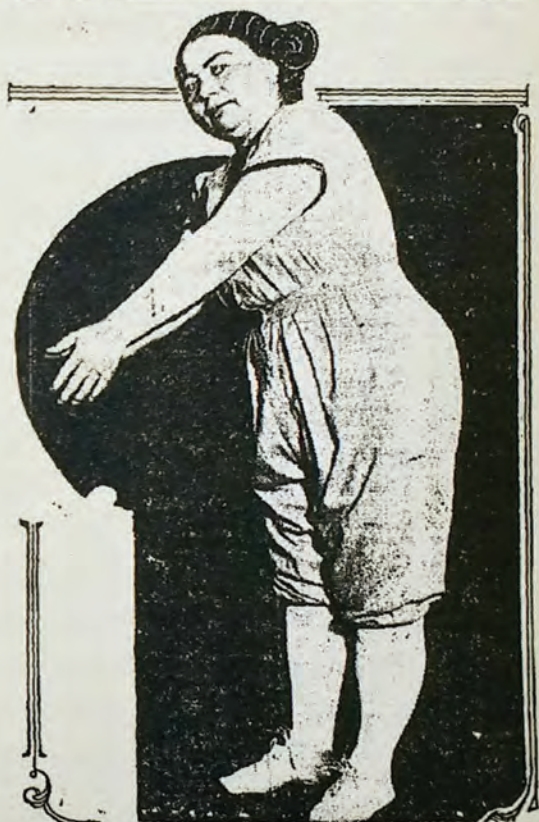


Ladova was a rare female physician and an activist in the suffrage movement. Before the city council, she complained about a “double standard of morality. If men are allowed to wear tights, why shouldn’t women be?” The council studied the issue for almost a year, deciding finally to leave the issue of acceptable bathing attire to the police. The chief of police declared that he considered bloomers to be appropriate swimwear for women, unless he said, they were overweight.

Ladova was a Jewish immigrant from Russia. She practiced in Wisconsin and throughout Chicago. The *Tribune* recognized her as “a leader in the fight for women’s rights” when she died in 1939.



Police Shocked by This Bathing Suit.



Dr. Rosalie M. Ladova



## The Organizer

Saul Alinsky residence  
5525 S. Blackstone Avenue

Alinsky graduated from the University of Chicago in 1930. In the thirties, he began his career as a community organizer in the Back of the Yards neighborhood. He founded the Industrial Areas Foundation (1940) and wrote *Reveille for Radicals* (University of Chicago Press, 1946) while living in Hyde Park (also in the same building at 5529). In the fifties, the IAF began to organize in Woodlawn, playing a role in the creation of The Woodlawn Organization (TWO).

Alinsky's field director during the drive to organize Woodlawn was Nicholas von Hoffman (1221 E. 57th). He was later a columnist for the *Washington Post* and the liberal in the first pair of commentators on the "Point/Counterpoint" segment of CBS's *60 Minutes*. During the Watergate hearings, he likened President Nixon to a "dead mouse

on the kitchen floor of America" and said that "the only question now is who's going to pick him up by his tail and throw him in the garbage." *60 Minutes* producer Don Hewitt fired him.

Left: In 1913 Dr. Rosalie M. Ladova appeared in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in her shocking bathing suit. Right: Organizer Saul Alinsky, PhD'30, in Chicago in 1966.

## Turabian

Room 206A in Cobb Hall was the office of Kate L. Turabian, the University's dissertation secretary (1930–58) and the author of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press, 1937). Known simply as "Turabian," it was and is the standard guide for research publications. A recent study identified Kate Turabian as the female author whose work is most often assigned in college courses, ahead of Toni Morrison and Jane Austen.





## Harold's

*Site of original Harold's Chicken Shack  
1235 E. 47th Street*

Harold P. Pierce came to Chicago from Alabama in 1943 and worked as a chauffeur for Jack Stern (1101 E. 48th), the owner of Kennedy Furniture Stores. His wife Hilda worked as a cook at the Home for the Friendless (5250 S. Ellis). On the side, they ran H&H, a small restaurant on 39th St. serving dumplings and chicken feet.

Pierce had dreamed of opening a fried chicken restaurant since the day in his boyhood when a preacher had supped with his family and ate up his mother's entire batch. In 1950, he was discussing his plans with friends over a game of checkers at a barbershop at 69th and South Pkwy. (King Dr.) when one of them, Gene Rosen, the owner of a poultry store at 353 E. 69th, offered him some fryers to experiment. It was a success.

Pierce sold the restaurant on 39th, contracted Rosen to supply his chicken, and

opened the first Harold's Chicken Shack at 47th and Kimbark. The restaurant moved to 1106 E. 47th in 1962 when urban renewal claimed its building. Soon Pierce was known as the Fried Chicken King. He made deliveries in a white Cadillac with painted wing feathers on the doors and a papier-mâché chicken head on the roof.

Pierce invented the red and white décor for the chicken shacks. He also commissioned the logo, a hatchet-bearing man in robe and crown chasing down a bolting hen. Pierce opened a second outlet at 6419 Cottage Grove in 1964 and two others shortly after. He soon began to franchise the restaurant to friends and relatives. Pierce required the franchisees to pay him a 42-cent royalty for each bird and to buy their chicken from Gene Rosen. Otherwise, he exercised lax control. Soon the city's Black neighborhoods were dotted with Harold's fried chicken restaurants.

At his death in 1988, Harold's had 40 chicken shacks. His daughter Kristen Pierce-Sherrod now oversees the Harold's empire.

**Above: The former Harold's Chicken location in Hyde Park at 1346 E. 53rd Street, now the site of a Target.**



# HOW WAS SPRING QUARTER?

Eight College students tell us  
what it was like.



Photography by Vera Soloviev, Class of 2023

Unable to visit the  
gym, rugby player Vera  
Soloviev, Class of 2023,  
had to improvise.





**W**ednesday, March 11, was the last normal day of 2020 for the University of Chicago.

The new reality began for me with a 9:24 p.m. text from a friend: “Check the maroon.” On the Maroon’s website was a breaking story: all Spring Quarter classes would be remote.

At 7:50 the next morning, an email from President **Robert J. Zimmer** and Provost **Ka Yee C. Lee** confirmed the University’s decision. By Friday, everyone in my office had been told to work from home indefinitely.

The story list I had prepared for the Summer issue of the Core, focused on in-person Spring Quarter events, was now useless. And the students—while trying to finish their

finals—were preparing for a quarter unlike any other period in the University’s history.

What would their Spring Quarter experience possibly be like? Through the Micro-Metcalf Program—a short-term, remote internship program funded by the College and organized by Career Advancement—I was able to find eight students who would tell me. I called the project Document Your Spring Quarter.

In response to weekly prompts, the students produced writing, photographs, artwork, interviews, and more. **Anne Pritikin**, Class of 2022, wrote a series of poetry-like “instruction pieces” inspired by the work of Yoko Ono. **Wren McMillan**, Class of 2023, made paintings and drawings. **Eli Winter**, AB’20, wrote

essays and music. **Vera Soloviev** and **Michael Han**, both Class of 2023, created photo essays and experimental writing based on electronic correspondence.

The pieces here are just a subset of what the students produced. I wanted to preserve their entire body of work, so that future generations could hear the voices of young people from 2020 for themselves. I asked the students to keep two audiences in mind: readers of the Summer/20 Core, and unknown readers of the future. The students have agreed to donate digital copies of their work to the Special Collections Research Center at the Regenstein Library, where they will be available for researchers in the decades or centuries to come.

—Carrie Golus, AB’91, AM’93

## Instruction Pieces

BY ANNE PRITIKIN, CLASS OF 2022

*Pritikin spent Spring Quarter living with her family in Mill Valley, California.*

### Deviation Piece

Be invited to a dinner party.  
Before eating, open the white envelope on your plate.  
Read the letter inside.  
Do not eat dinner.  
Only talk about the letter.  
Do not directly mention the contents of the letter.  
Talk around the letter.  
Talk about the letter-shaped hole in your:

- a) plans
- b) future
- c) past



### Letter Piece

Send the letter to your:

- a) mother
- b) friends
- c) family
- d) therapist

- e) mailman
- f) hairdresser
- g) foe
- h) everyone

### Talk Piece

Talk about the letter to yourself.  
Talk about the letter with your mother.  
Talk about the letter with your friends.  
Talk only about the letter.  
Read the letter.  
Reread the letter.  
Burn the letter.  
Sweep the letter ash into your hand.  
Blow the letter ash.  
Wait one hour.  
Open your door.  
Pick up the white envelope outside.  
Pour out the letter ash from the envelope into your hand.  
Breathe the letter.  
Taste the letter.  
Touch the letter.  
Smell the letter.  
Poke the letter.  
Crumple the letter.  
Uncrease the letter.  
Tape the letter to your mirror.



### Imaginary Piece

Look at a map.  
Find where you would be.  
Think of an imaginary self continuing life.

### Window Piece

Find all the windows in your house.  
Divide the hours in the day by the number of windows.  
Stand in front of each window for the allotted amount of time.  
Stand still.  
Stare out of the window.  
Rotate to a different window for each transition.  
Do not do anything else.

### Clothing Piece

Wrap yourself in as much clothing as possible.  
Do not leave any skin uncovered.  
Walk around the room without touching anything.  
Do not touch the ground.  
If you are living with others, have them wrap themselves.  
Gather in the smallest room.  
Close the door.  
Do not touch the door handle.  
Walk around the room without touching anyone.  
Walk around faster.  
Have each person imagine everyone else is chasing them.  
Have everyone put on a blindfold.  
Run.

### Wash Piece

Wash your clothing.  
Wash your body.  
Wash your hands.  
Wash your face.  
Wash your sink.  
Wash your soap.  
Wash your water.



### Measure Piece

Measure the distance between you and your friends.  
Measure the distance between you and your family.  
Add the distances together.  
Count the number of days you have not touched your friends.  
Count the number of days you have not touched your family.



Add these days together.  
Multiply the total distance by the total number of days.  
This is how far you are from where you were.

### Mask Piece

Count your moods.  
Buy that number of masks.  
Draw your moods onto each mask.  
Remember:  
a) sad mood  
b) angry mood  
c) hungry mood  
d) anxious mood  
e) lonely mood  
Wear the mask that matches your mood.  
Wear your mask outside.

### List Piece

Make a list of all the books you are going to read.  
Make a list of all the films you are going to watch.  
Make a list of all the songs you are going to listen to.  
Make a list of all the languages you are going to learn.  
Make a list of all your lists.  
Spend all your time writing lists.  
Burn the lists.

### Calendar Piece

Count the days in the week.  
Count the days in the month.  
Count the days in the year.  
Count the days instead of living them.

### Hide Piece

Play hide-and-seek.  
Invite:  
a) family  
b) friends  
Have each person hide in a different area.  
Do not seek.

## To be in a Time of Finals Pandemic

BY WREN MCMILLAN, CLASS OF 2023

*McMillan spent Spring Quarter living alone in a sublet apartment in Hyde Park.*

Admittedly, when talk of COVID-19 became widespread here, I didn't think it was a big deal. Like many, I thought it was closer to a rough flu than a potentially deadly respiratory disease. I'm young and, because of that, often feel invincible despite that fact that I am quite obviously not. Being a disabled person and knowing that COVID-19 impacts that demographic rather harshly, I found myself in a state of denial; downplaying the seriousness of the disease, however naïvely and ignorantly, was a way of coping.

On some other level, though, I attribute my original reaction to a desire to ignore everything that occurred outside of my little UChicago bubble. I was tumbling quickly toward finals season and, therefore, had a workload that demanded my full and undivided attention. I didn't have time to grapple with the idea of returning home to a town (but not a family) that didn't really seem to want me. I didn't have time to deal with the inevitable lack of housing stability tied to my eventual decision to stay, nor did I have time to figure out how I would pay for said housing. If I was going to maintain the academic standard that I held myself to every day, I couldn't deal with the potential impacts of COVID-19 as they truly were.

When the announcement came that confirmed my muffled suspicions, I was fortunate. I'd secured an apartment and would be able to remain in this city that I now call home. However, the time that it took to do those things left me in a crunch when it came to my finals.

So, to provide an answer to Where was I? I don't know. I don't. My brain was flitting between a billion different places (not an exaggeration) while my physical form sat behind a computer, staring at a blinking cursor, dry-eyed from both staring and crying. Looking back, it all feels like a fever dream.

## ALL THE BAD THINGS/ NOTES ON OBLIVION

Do you ever just wake up and wonder if everything's real? And you take a step back and think for a moment about how the saying "too good to be true" isn't a lie, but neither is "too bad to be true."

I know I'm not the only one who's scared, but being alone certainly makes it feel that way. Connection isn't connection anymore. Four bars of LTE cannot replace sensation. Touch. Sound as it's meant to be heard. Wind in the Windy City isn't the same through windows and windscreens. And what little support I can give feels empty.

Someday, when I can look out the window and recognize the world (whether or not I can look in a mirror and recognize myself doesn't matter), I'll not waste that moment. Because there are so many combinations of good and bad things that are better than this.

**Top: To Be in a Time of Finals Pandemic** (see artist's statement at left). **Middle: Visine Dreams**, about the discomfort of staring at screens. **Bottom: The Time I Forgot Thursday**, a "squiggly clock" painted on a paper plate, because McMillan was unable to buy canvas while nonessential businesses were closed.





## Concerts

BY ELI WINTER, AB'20

*Winter remained in his off-campus apartment during Spring Quarter.*

I'm writing this at four in the morning. I couldn't sleep—as usual—and got up when I heard a siren. Every time I hear one I think it's an ambulance, and they come at all hours.

I've been given questions to answer. Some feel unanswerable. How did I get here? What was the hardest thing to do? Not was—is.

The easy ones first. I was with a friend at Jimmy's. I'm still in Hyde Park. Of course I thought it might be a threat, not that it would be one.

A bit about me: I work as a musician, as I have for a few years; I'm in my last quarter as a fourth-year studying nonfiction; two months ago, most of what I knew about the virus came from concerts. I went to two on back-to-back nights. The first, two local bands played a packed bar. The second, a bigger touring band played a bigger room, but the crowd was thin. I talked with local musician friends with shows on the books suddenly struggling to decide whether they should cancel. "I don't think you grasped the severity of this," a friend wrote me. It's not that I didn't get it; I hoped, like I think my friends did, it would stay in the conditional.

At first—maybe just for a moment—I thought canceling classes was an overreaction. I didn't

want to go home. Maybe it'll blow over soon. When the music starts, where would you rather be? Rather, my parents are old: my mom, 62, a preschool teacher; my dad, almost 70, a doctor and lifelong asthmatic. Even though I'm living alone, and have for about three weeks, I can count all the times I've left my apartment on one hand. Friends implore me to go for walks, send me reports and statistics as if to say, See, it's safe, you can go outside, it's OK, and I stay in, terrified of catching it and suffering by myself, or—worse—transmitting it without knowing. On good days, a friend who lives in my building raps my window and we talk through the glass.

In an alternate timeline I'd have planned three months of fall concerts in the United States and Europe; now I'm enraged at people who travel when they don't need to. I leave the apartment for essentials, masked and gloved; when I see people without, I want to clobber them from six feet away. I observed a Zoom Passover seder with family and friends and felt ghostly.

The hardest thing to do is a constellation of hard things. The pandemic impacts everything; everything is hard. Or feels hard, but it is. Ambient dread.

As for before: I miss my friends. I miss the places I have felt welcome. I miss smelling weed on the sidewalk. I miss the radio station and shorter hair and overpriced doughnuts. I miss touch. I miss not waiting for the other shoe to drop. I am grateful for those moments in which a person is not so aware that they are living through history.

**Below: A still from a YouTube video of Winter playing an untitled song. In the video's description, Winter explains the song was "written for Augusta Read Thomas in the midst of a three-and-a-half month stretch when I was largely alone in quarantine." Hear the song at [mag.uchicago.edu/winter-untitled](http://mag.uchicago.edu/winter-untitled).**



*"I miss my friends. I miss the places I have felt welcome. ... I miss the radio station and shorter hair and overpriced doughnuts. I miss touch."*

*—Eli Winter, AB'20*





**Top:** Rossman's painting *Greenery* was inspired by conflicted feelings: happiness at returning to her rural home, sadness that "my world was rapidly disintegrating."

**Bottom:** On a walk with friends Ruby, Razi, and Naomi. "I'm lucky to have friendships that are older than my oldest memories."





## Early Spread

**BY SAGE ROSSMAN,  
CLASS OF 2023**

*Rossman spent Spring Quarter living with her parents in Olema, California, a small town about an hour from the Bay Area.*


On March 8 I received a text from my father, an emergency room doctor: “Working in Oakland today. The COVID cruise ship with 3500 people aboard is about to dock ... in Oakland.” My father is not easily fazed. If he can’t be in control of a situation, then he finds a way to be in control of his emotions. The scariest thing for me about the early viral spread was that it scared my father too.

elderberry capsules, as new, poorly reviewed research started coming out. My parents jokingly advised me: “If you have any research you’ve been waiting to submit, now would be the time. They’re publishing fucking anything.”

Though easily as well-read as my father, my mother did not share his usual confidence. Neither of them denied the uncertainty of the moment, but after an initial scramble for information, my father simply buried his concerns and emotions. For my mother, the void created by the lack of reputable research was filled with reports from Italy of emergency room doctors dying and health care workers going weeks without seeing their families. The United States was tracking about 10 days behind Italy during the early spread.

*“The scariest thing for me about the early viral spread was that it scared my father too.”*

*—Sage Rossman, Class of 2023*



When viral photos of doctors with mask-shaped bruises started popping up on my social media and reports of the first West Coast cases came in, my parents started ramping up their research. As medical professionals, they turned to the facts to face their fears. It became increasingly clear that the facts they sought just didn’t exist. The alleged 3 percent death rate was far too high. Incubation period was anywhere from one to two weeks, but it varied case to case. The sensitivity and specificity of the virus testing were unknown.

My mother, a recovery room nurse whose unit had just begun preparatory intensive care training, went through a phase when she spent at least eight hours of every day on the internet researching the latest publications. She urged my father and me to take vitamin C tablets, then zinc supplements, then

A few nights after arriving home from Chicago, I heard my mother sobbing downstairs. I found her curled up on the couch with my father beside her, doing his best to console her. She’d had a panic attack after spending all day reading about the rapid spread in New York, and was mumbling through sniffles about her concern for my father. He was nearly 50 and had survived cancer twice. He was high-risk, and as our area was far from its peak of cases, it was hard to imagine him not contracting it at some point. He could only assure her that everything would be OK, with no evidence to back it up.

We’ve never been a religious family, usually favoring facts over faith. However, it’s easy to understand the need for faith when facts fail us. Not in a higher power, not in our government, not even in science, but in the simple belief that with perseverance and strength, we will endure.

*“In Chicago I was going to the gym three times, on top of two practices, every week. Back home, all of the gyms have been closed.”*

*—Vera Soloview, Class of 2023*

## Texts and Photos

**BY VERA SOLOVIEW,  
CLASS OF 2023**

*Soloview spent Spring Quarter with her family in Anchorage, Alaska. Her brother Vasily, Class of 2021, remained in Hyde Park.*

### Part One: Chicago

24 January 2020

10:12 pm

**Shá (boyfriend):** Hey I don't wanna be over worried or worry you, but apparently the Coronavirus is breaking out in Chicago? Idk just stay safe!! Hard to avoid these things! Also apparently AK is at risk!

30 January 2020

9:58 am

**Mom:** Good morning dear children. Just the word of warning that coronavirus is in Chicago. Be extra careful, please!

**Vasily:** I'll be careful, but I also don't think it's too much to worry, CDC has really clamped down on it

11 March 2020

6:19 pm

**Vasily:** We have not got an email yet, but it seems that this is official: next quarter will be completely remote. It has been leaked to the school newspaper, but an email should be coming soon.

**Mom:** Wow. Everything is happening so fast.

**Me:** yes. we will facetime you tomorrow once we have processed this on our own.



12 March 2020

2:10 pm

**Shá's friend:** I was gonna ask out a girl in my anthropology class when we got back from break. So much for that

3:06 pm

**Shá:** Wow I'm just watching the news and literally sports leagues are canceled. Broadway shows. Tons of players and politicians are testing positive. So weird that this is happening.

14 March 2020

7:21 am

**Me:** i just wanted to say even tho it sucks that we're being forced onto the online system and essentially getting kicked out of the dorms lol, i'm so excited to be back home and see all of y'all. . . . we can all do homework together

**Friend back home:** Brooo yeee are ye coming back???

**Me:** yee i think so, unless all domestic flights are canceled

17 March 2020

10:03 pm

**Vasily:** First case on campus, a student at Booth school of business

**Mom:** Stay away from everybody.

21 March 2020

12:30 am

**Vasily:** How is everybody?

**Me:** good - washing all my clothes and leaving suitcases outside for a couple days haha

**Me:** how are things with you

**Vasily:** Finally completely moved out of Max [Palevsky]. Just now unpacking into [girlfriend]'s apartment.

**Mom:** Do you have masks? I don't care what they say. All Asian countries wear masks and keeping it under better control it seems.

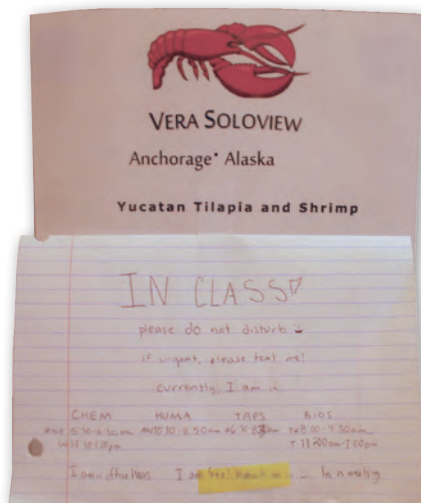
**Vasily:** If they have masks, we'll buy them.

**Mom:** Good luck. Otherwise there are videos on YouTube how to make them. Some Russian ideas are really simple and quick.

**Vasily:** Hmm, good idea.

## Part Two: Anchorage

At the beginning of Spring Quarter, getting up for my general chemistry lecture at 5 a.m. meant getting up before the sun rose. As the quarter went on, Alaska's five hours of daylight during winter continued to shift into the 22 hours of daylight for summer.



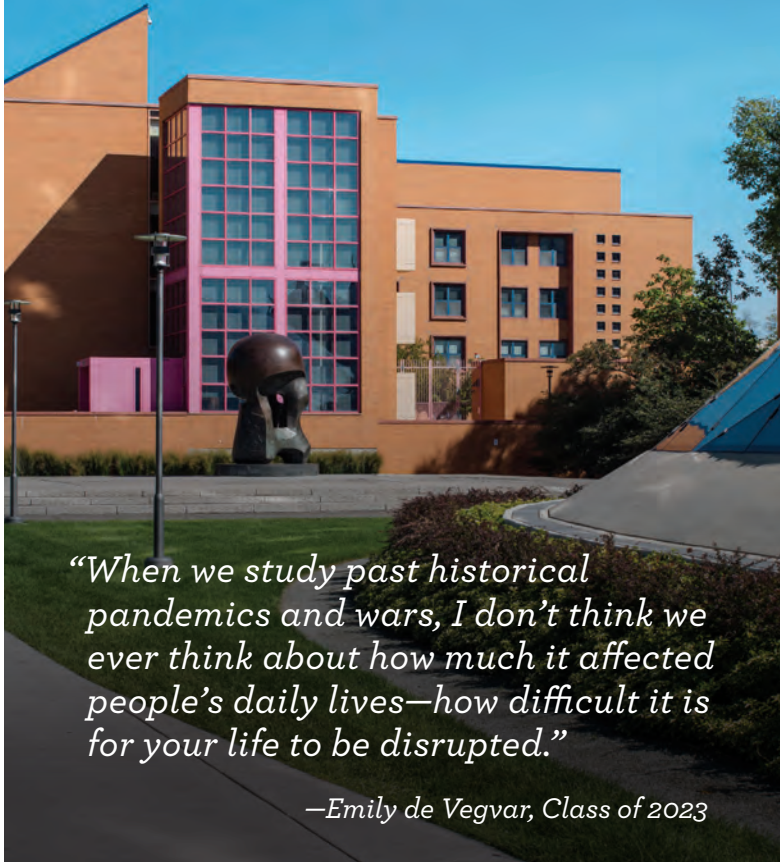
When I was packing, I made sure to take my Alper House door sign from the Max Palevsky dorms, designating me as a Yucatan

Tilapia and Shrimp meal from Red Lobster. I taped the card onto my bedroom door, trying to replicate my environment on campus. Because I knew my parents had a tendency of coming into my room without knocking, I made sure to include an "IN CLASS!" sign.



My dad was put on temporary leave from his government job, so he has to rely on his work as a notary public. In the "Before Times," my dad's clients would come into our house. This is not an option, especially as my mother is immunocompromised. Now my dad has instructions for his clients posted outside our house.

Winter Quarter is conditioning season for UChicago's women's rugby team. In Chicago I was going to the gym three times, on top of two practices, every week. Back home, all of the gyms have been closed. Fortunately, I live five minutes away from my high school's football field. I bike to the field, run the track, and do any bodyweight workout I can with the equipment left out on the field.



## The Ones Who Stayed

BY XAVIOR LEWIS,  
CLASS OF 2023

Lewis was one of 125 students who remained on campus during Spring Quarter. Students were housed in Max Palevsky Residential Commons, one person to a room. All common areas and dining halls were closed; meals were to-go only.

Lewis interviewed two other Max P residents, **Emily de Vegvar** and **Alice Tay**, both Class of 2023, about life on a ghost campus.

*“When we study past historical pandemics and wars, I don’t think we ever think about how much it affected people’s daily lives—how difficult it is for your life to be disrupted.”*

—Emily de Vegvar, Class of 2023

EMILY DE VEGVAR,  
Class of 2023

### How are you doing?

I’m good. I just woke up.

### At 11:54?

Well I had a German thing at 9:30, so I woke up for that and went back to bed.

### What do you usually do to pass the time, besides naps?

Scroll through the internet, to be honest. Watch TV. Read.

### Where were you when you found out Spring Quarter would be remote?

I was in the house lounge and everyone was freaking out. People were shook. Some girls were crying. Spring Quarter was something we’d been looking forward to. It felt like we were robbed of something.

### What did you personally feel robbed of?

I made really close friends during Winter Quarter and hoped to make more in Spring. I was going to assistant-direct a play. I was going to do more stuff in the city.

### What was the process of getting settled into your new situation?

I stayed for an extra week in South [Campus] while everyone left for spring break before moving to Max Palevsky.

### Why did you stay?

A combination of reasons. I felt like I would be going back in time if I had gone back home. To a high school time, except I’d be unable to leave the house. I felt like going back to London would revert me back into that older version of myself.

### How have your social connections been during quarantine?

Good. I hang out a lot with my friend Alice [Tay]. We decided we would stay if the other person stayed. We see ourselves as self-isolating together. So I spend a lot of my meals with her. I’ve met some other people, and we all have [socially distanced] meals on the quad.

### What was the hardest part of this transition?

To see all of my friends go. Gradually

they all just trickled out. Helping my friends pack, and getting last meals and everything.

### When is this all going to end?

I don’t think we’re going to get normal back for a very long time, or ever. Hopefully we will come back in October, but it will be different. No parties, no letting other people into dorms, maybe they’ll have students in hotels.

I’m scared about people being able to go to crowded spaces. I think that especially young people—we really enjoy that and it’s really good for social interaction. I also worry that kids growing up now will get too used to social distancing and that may affect their mental health long term.

### What would you want future historians to know?

When we study past historical pandemics and wars, I don’t think we ever think about how much it affected people’s daily lives—how difficult it is for your life to be disrupted.



**ALICE TAY,**  
Class of 2023

*Tell me something interesting about you.*

Well, I play the piano.

*Have you been able to play recently?*

Unfortunately, no. They've closed off all the practice rooms and common spaces.

*How are you doing with quarantine as a whole?*

Pretty well. I do think being in Max P was the right decision for me, because had I gone home, I wouldn't have been allowed out of the house.

I grew up in Malaysia, but I studied in Singapore and I'd go back and forth. I miss all my friends like everyone else does, but there's no FOMO [fear of missing out] because no one's with each other now.

*I totally get that. What has been a hard transition?*

Discussion-based classes online. I have some lecture classes like Core Bio and Psych, which I prefer online because you can go back to check what the professor said if you miss something.

But the discussion classes are weird. Everyone is on mute and you can't tell who you should be looking at. The Soc professor is usually really funny, but the jokes can't deliver the same way when you're not in person.

*Cost benefit analysis: Is going online better than in person, considering the lecture class benefits?*

Definitely not.

*I feel you. How's campus?*

The weather is gorgeous and the

campus is getting prettier and prettier. It's upsetting to see the campus so nice and not be able to enjoy that with your friends. There's no one here to share the beauty with.

*When you first found out about coronavirus, did you think it'd be as big a threat as it has become?*

I did. The virus hit Asia first. I heard about cases from my friends in Singapore. I have friends who are studying in Korea, and they told me about how bad it was.

*“It’s upsetting to see the campus so nice and not be able to enjoy that with your friends. There’s no one here to share the beauty with.”*

*—Alice Tay, Class of 2023*

*Did you feel like the people close to you took appropriate action?*

Not until we found out school was going online. We were all still joking about it in Cathey [Dining Commons]. When someone would sneeze, it'd be a joke to yell “Coronavirus!” But now no one would make that joke.

*How do you feel about how the United States has responded?*

I feel like the US response was bad compared to other countries. In Singapore and Hong Kong and Korea, places where I have friends, people are more willing to listen to the government. In America people

prioritize individual rights and freedoms over the better good.

For example, my friend in South Korea had his phone actively monitored, which was actually good, because his friend contracted the virus. His location helped identify the people who may have been exposed, so they called those people in to get tested.

*What have you been doing to cope?*

I call my family pretty often. They're worried about me being here. That takes up a chunk of my day because

of the time difference. I play guitar as well as bike around.

*Are you worried at all? We are around each other pretty often and have to go to the same places every day.*

I think the measures UChicago has put in place, like closing the common spaces and kitchens, were really good. Now the only person I talk to on a regular basis is Emily.

I'm not too scared, especially because of our age. My roommate had it, as well as her twin sister and father, and they all recovered. I'm not too worried in terms of my health, but I don't want to be a carrier and help it travel to other people who may not be as lucky.



## A New Era

BY ELIJAH SMITH, CLASS OF 2021

*Smith spent Spring Quarter living with his family in St. Johns, Florida.*

Good news! It's June 6, 2020, and the pandemic is over.

Not actually, of course. But it's hard to remember that. Two and a half weeks ago, I was at my sister's graduation party, freaking out over the 10 people in attendance and just about losing my mind when they hugged anyone. Proximity felt like a threat.

But then earlier today, I was shoulder to shoulder in a crowd 10,000 strong—the largest protest in Jacksonville, Florida's history. What's almost weirder is that I didn't care. I had absolutely zero panic attacks.<sup>1</sup>

How could we possibly have gotten here? If you'd told two-and-a-half-weeks-ago Elijah that he'd be doing these things ... well, his only way of processing it would be, "I will stop believing in the coronavirus and start going to the reopening protests. Apparently."<sup>2</sup> The actual course of events—the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests after the murder of George Floyd by four Minneapolis cops—wouldn't even have occurred to him.

At most of the protests I went to, the cops blocked off a short, inoffensive route. Once, at a

march organized by Jacksonville mayor Lenny Curry to congratulate himself for taking down a Confederate statue, the cops went as far as telling us, "That's enough." We turned back. I'm not sure if that "protest" even counted as one.

The most meaningful demonstration was in St. Augustine, about 45 minutes away. Called Standing in Strength, it was led by Rev. Ron Rawls of the St. Paul AME Church. The destination: "St. Augustine Slave Market (the plaza)," according to the event announcement.

We occupied the highway, rather than the sidewalks. A counterprotester drove his car into the crowd. The guy didn't drive very quickly into us—just swerved into the protest, made a few people jump back. No one was hurt, thankfully, though of course the cops didn't do anything.

I'm back in Chicago now. In Jacksonville, BLM protesters were planning on tearing down the Confederate monument that the cops were guarding, if the city didn't; I hope they did.

So. Yes. I suppose I don't have more to offer you than "We processed these two giant things by never ever holding them in tandem and by allowing our minds to put them in neat little boxes."

Living through history is exhausting.

**After the killing of George Floyd, Black Lives Matter protests—like this one in St. Augustine, Florida—were organized in every state in the nation and in cities around the world.**

<sup>1</sup> Excepting the ones I had when I saw a cop. These were super mild, though. Also, I was wearing a mask. Just want to clarify that. <sup>2</sup>This is not what happened.



## Subject Lines @uchicago.edu

BY MICHAEL HAN, CLASS OF 2023

Han spent Spring Quarter living with his parents in Katy, Texas.

March 30, 2020

Monday's Meal Specials at University of Chicago

March 31, 2020

Supporting South Side | COVID-19 hot spots

April 2, 2020

Your application to Micro-Metcalf Program | The University of Chicago was successfully submitted

April 6, 2020

Spring Quarter Message from Provost Lee

April 10, 2020

[\*Yuen House\*] Yuen House - Staying Connected

April 17, 2020

recipe exchange

April 23, 2020

Quarantine and Life of the Mind

April 28, 2020

Ducks of Botany Pond | COVID-19 symptoms

May 19, 2020

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion during COVID-19

May 31, 2020

Chicago Protests and Campus Access

June 2, 2020

On requests to cancel final exam: STAT 23400 2,1 (Spring 2020) Statistical Models/Method-1

June 4, 2020

You're Invited: Taking a Stand Against Racism

June 9, 2020

Teaching awards | History of pandemics

June 10, 2020

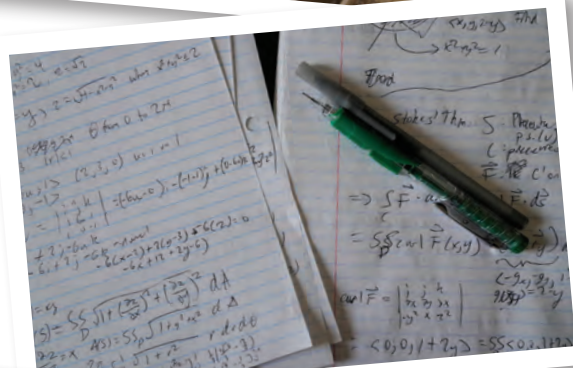
An end-of-year message from Dean Boyer

June 11, 2020

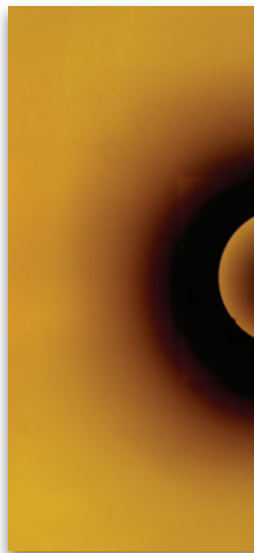
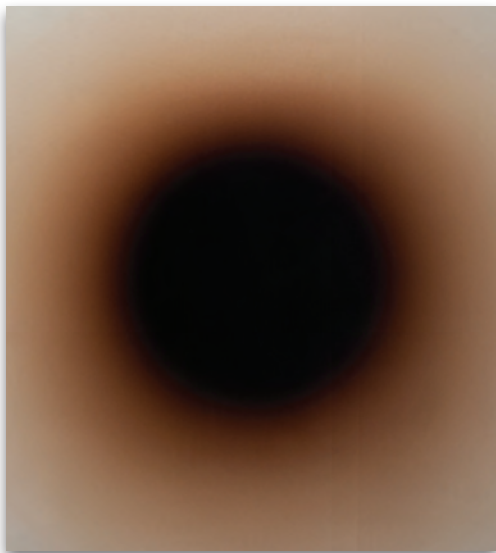
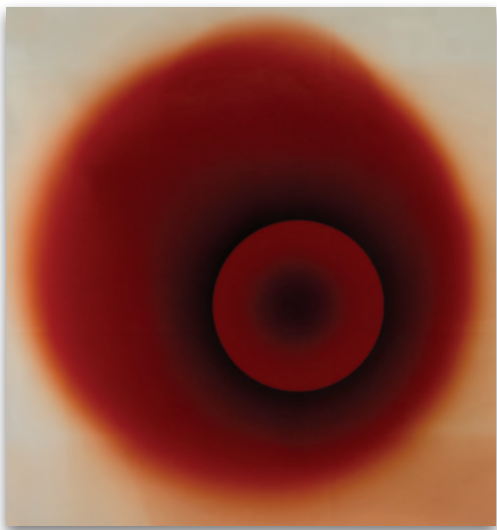
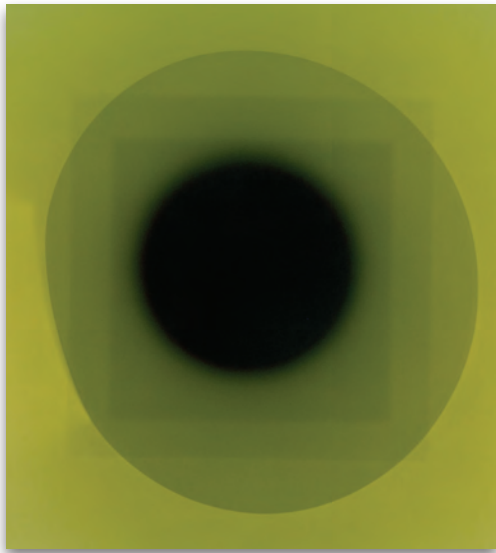
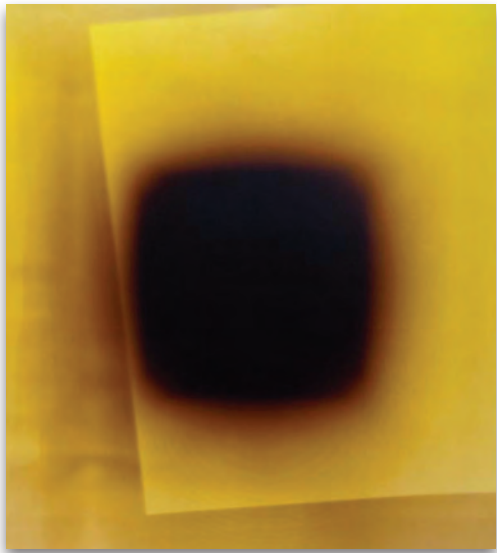
[cnrc-eastres] To Finishing Finals & a Glorious Graduation!

June 12, 2020

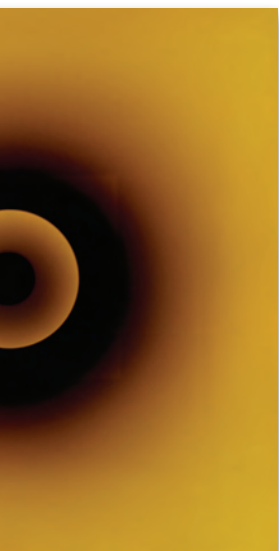
Friday's Meal Specials at University of Chicago



From Han's photo essay "Texas Blues" about a typical Spring Quarter day. Top to bottom: A self-portrait in the front door of his parents' house; preparing for a math quiz; taking a break in his mother's garden; out for a walk in the neighborhood.







# EXPO-SITION

Adam Nadel, AB'90, uses high-energy electrons to capture portraits of the invisible natural world.



By Maureen Searcy

Fermilab's Accelerator Application Development and Demonstration (A2D2) tool is a low-power, high-energy repurposed medical linear accelerator—the kind used for radiation cancer therapy—obtained when a hospital upgraded its technology. Photojournalist Adam Nadel, AB'90, used it to create art.

In January 2020 photographer **Adam Nadel**, AB'90, spent a day shooting Fermilab's high-energy electron beam at precisely positioned photo paper. (Don't worry, a physicist was actually pushing the buttons.)

Nadel has documented some heavy topics: war in Darfur, pollution in the Everglades, vector-borne diseases. His exhibition *Malaria: Blood, Sweat, and Tears* was featured in the *University of Chicago Magazine* in 2012. At Fermilab he chose lighter material—the lightest stable subatomic particle in the universe.

Traditional photography uses light to kick-start a chemical reaction on film or directly on photographic paper to create images, capturing the visible world. Nadel used high-energy electrons to do the same thing without a camera, capturing the invisible world.

Laying photographic paper on the target area below the beam—the Accelerator Application Development and Demonstration (A2D2) tool—Nadel then arranged metal plates of varying shapes and sizes to deflect electrons, producing negative space images. As with light-based photography, Nadel's images don't appear until the paper is developed.

When Nadel first experimented with electron-based portraiture in 2018 as Fermilab's artist in residence, no one had ever tried anything like it. He calls his images "Nadelgrams," a nod to Man Ray's cameraless "rayographs."

*This interview has been edited and condensed.*

What made you want to be Fermilab's artist in residence?

I have been trying to photograph in Fermilab since I was an undergrad. It's one of the most remarkable places in the world.

What got you interested in the particle beams?

My proposal was to use a traditional camera to document how science is done at Fermi by exploring the interconnected web/systems of people working at the facility. I had a number of ideas—one was exposing photographic paper to radiation generated by a particle accelerator. I raised this idea with deputy director Tim Meyer, and he was very supportive. Through

relationships at the lab, facilitated by physicist Kurt Riesselmann, I was introduced to Tom Kroc, a physicist who works on A2D2, who got the ball rolling.

Did you set out to make 21st-century rayographs?

Man Ray was on my mind before I even started playing with the machines. I talked with [professor emeritus of art history] **Joel Snyder**, SB'61, my favorite teacher at Chicago, and he was very keen on the idea of trying to recreate Man Ray's work using direct electrons. But the nature of the electron beam—with its intensity in the center and then dissipating outward—made this very challenging.

*"The nature of the electron beam—with its intensity in the center and then dissipating outward—made this very challenging."*

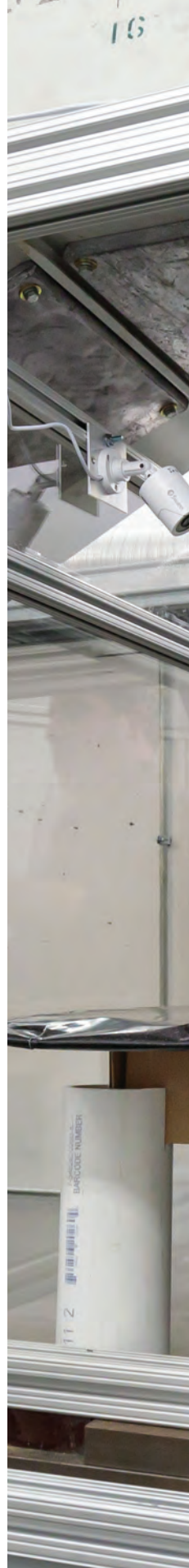
*—Adam Nadel, AB'90*

Have you done other nontraditional projects?

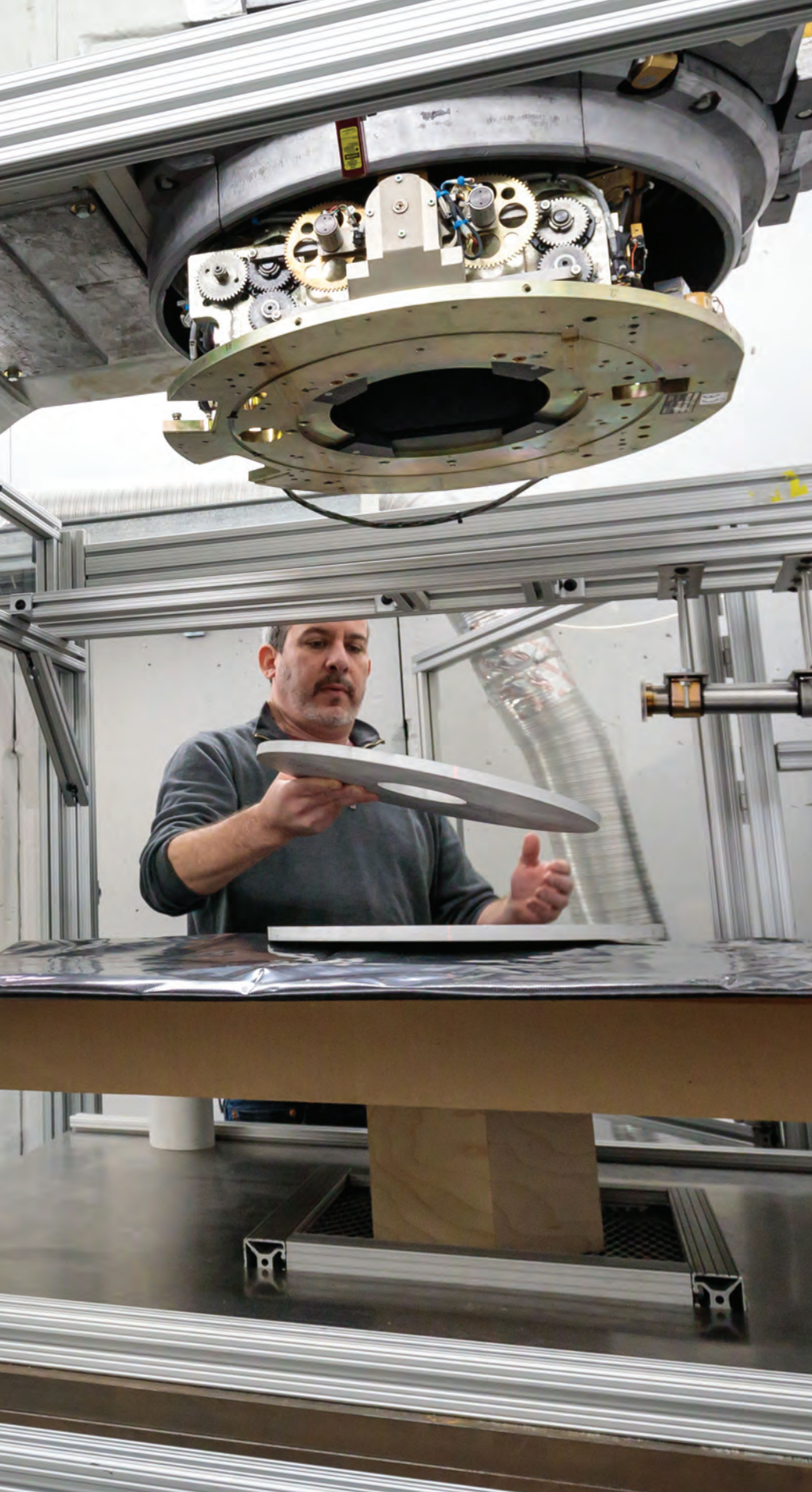
For the last two years I have been making tintypes from vintage Civil War images and working with them as sculptural objects. Currently I am working on a project that integrates photographic portraiture and physical objects associated with COVID-19.

Any future science-art projects in mind?

I'm generating a proposal to use brain scans to push the relationship between science and art making. I want to fuse art object creation and scientific discovery—to challenge those thinkers who claim that art and science are fundamentally different, with only science being capable of finding "truths." ✨

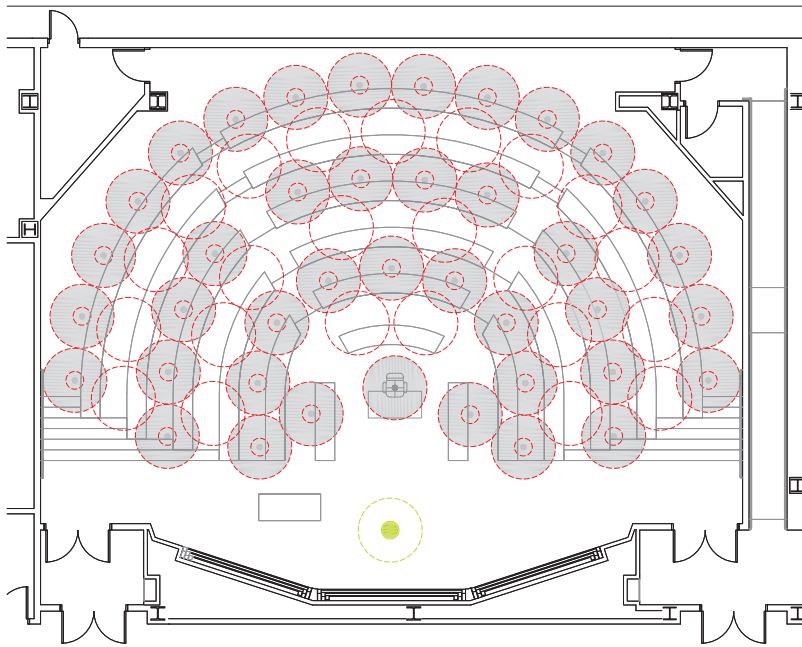






Photographic paper (protected here by black plastic as Nadel arranges metal plates on top) is coated in gelatin seeded with crystals of silver salt, often silver bromide. In traditional photography, energy in the form of photons—light—dislodges electrons from the bromide ions. The negatively charged electrons eventually combine with the positively charged silver ions, forming silver metal—a process exaggerated through developing to produce a visible image. Electrons from the linear accelerator replace the light energy while also possibly providing the electrons for the silver directly, sidestepping the need to knock electrons off the bromide.





## Diagram

# A 2020 CLASSROOM

An example of a UChicago classroom reconfigured for social distancing. The room's original capacity is 119 seats; under the new guidelines for social distancing, it's 39. (Information current as of July 15.)

Campus working groups continue to plan for Autumn Quarter. As these plans evolve, you can find the latest information at [college.uchicago.edu/2020-college/autumn-2020-faqs](https://college.uchicago.edu/2020-college/autumn-2020-faqs).  
—Carrie Golus, AB'91, AM'93



## Games

# ALTERNATE REALITY

During Spring Quarter, a team of scholars affiliated with UChicago's Weston Game Lab developed *A Labyrinth*, an alternate reality game. More than 70 teams played the game, which involved helping a shy creature, the Taur, find its way back to its home in Regenstein Library.



## FOUR DECADES IN THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

*Larry McEnerney, AM'80, has taught generations of writers to consider their readers.*

In 1978 **Larry McEnerney**, AM'80, was a graduate student and an aspiring literary scholar. He had signed up to help teach a course on high-level professional and academic writing—the first iteration of what would become the Little Red Schoolhouse—organized by faculty members Joseph M. Williams and Gregory Colomb.

The graduate students for the course met on Monday nights in Cobb Hall. “We would come in expecting to be trained, and it would be three hours of Joe and Greg arguing with each other about writing,” McEnerney says. “On the one hand, it was terrifying because we were going to have to teach a course when we didn’t know what the content was going to be. On the other hand, it was thrilling.”

McEnerney was one of the 12 initial graduate students to teach Academic and Professional Writing (The Little Red Schoolhouse), as it’s listed in the course catalog. This spring, after more than 40 years with the University, he retired.

McEnerney met Williams “by sheer luck,” he says: Williams was one of the examiners on his preliminary oral exam. McEnerney’s potential career as a scholar was stalling as he made a disheartening realization: “I was bad at scholarship because I didn’t like literature,” he says. “I had created a self-image grounded in becoming an English professor, and I had to be pulled kicking and screaming into recognizing that this made little

sense.” When McEnerney went to talk to Williams about improving his writing, “he got me fascinated with what he was doing.”

Over 10 intense weeks, the Little Red Schoolhouse curriculum unpacks the demands of expert writing and prepares students to convey their work to a variety of audiences. “It’s not particularly interesting that experts are bad at writing to nonexperts. What else would you expect?” McEnerney says. “But it’s puzzling that experts tend to be bad at writing to other experts. They share the same vocabulary, training, and knowledge. Instead they endlessly complain about each other’s writing.”

Though the course’s informal name would seem to imply a fundamental approach to writing, McEnerney says it actually responds to the complicated needs of students at various stages of their education. “There are aspects of writing that are basic skill,” said McEnerney. “But there are aspects of writing that are not basic. The Schoolhouse is a response to a set of problems that don’t arise until you take a particular path in your professional development.”



In addition to his work with Little Red Schoolhouse, Larry McEnerney, AM'80, and his wife, Cathe, served as resident deans in Renee Granville-Grossman Residential Commons East since it opened in 2009.

McEnerney’s legacy also includes the University Writing Program, which oversees the Little Red Schoolhouse curriculum and helps every first-year undergraduate through the Humanities Core.

In his lectures, McEnerney urges students to think about the particular readership for their writing—whether it’s a legal brief, business proposal, scholarly article, or op-ed. “The more that writing is taught as a standardized skill and is assessed in a standardized way, the more that specifics about readers are erased,” McEnerney says. In contrast, Little Red Schoolhouse asks students to think about “the difference between one set of readers and another.”

A lecture from 2014, “The Craft of Writing Effectively,” is available on YouTube (see it at [mag.uchicago.edu/writing-effectively](http://mag.uchicago.edu/writing-effectively)). It’s been viewed more than a million times and has inspired more than 1,500 comments. “This guy needs a Patreon account,” one commenter wrote. “I feel like I owe him money. There’s a shocking amount of useful information in this lecture.” Another: “If I had this teacher in college, my life would be completely different.”

—Emily R. Ehret, AB'19

# DIRECTIONS FOR BUILDING A HOUSE OF CARDS

*Elder Olson, AB'34, AM'35, PhD'38*

This is a house of cards. To build this house  
You must have patience, and a steady hand.  
That is the difficulty. You must have a steady hand  
No matter what has happened, and unless something has happened  
You will not care to build this house of cards.

And you must have cards, enough to tell your fortune  
Or make your fortune, but to build this house  
You must see all fortunes merely as so many cards,  
Differing, no doubt, but not for you.  
You must know this, and still keep a steady hand.

And you must have patience, and nothing better to do  
Than to make this toy because it was your way  
To make a toy of fortune, which was not your toy,  
Until at last you have nothing better to do  
Than to build this final thing with nothing inside,

Fool's work, a monument to folly, but built with difficulty  
Because everything is difficult once you understand  
That after what has been, nothing can be  
But things like this, with nothing inside, like you.  
You must see this, and somehow keep a steady hand.

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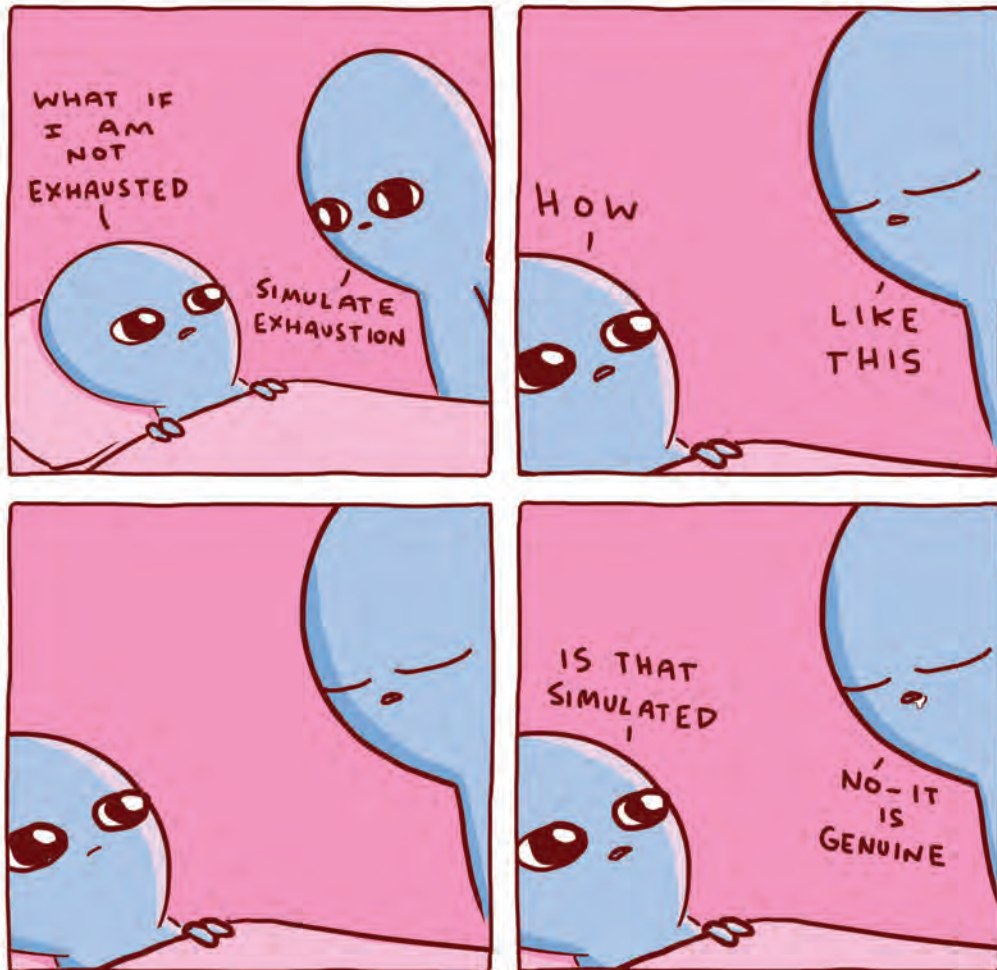
*Elder Olson, AB'34, AM'35, PhD'38, a founder of the Chicago  
school of literary criticism, taught English at UChicago  
from 1942 until his retirement in 1977. He died in 1992.*

**"Directions for Building a House of Cards" from *Olson's Penny Arcade* by Elder Olson. © 1975 by Elder Olson. Originally published in the *Virginia Quarterly Review*. Reproduced by permission of the University of Chicago Press. All rights reserved.**



*Strange Planet*

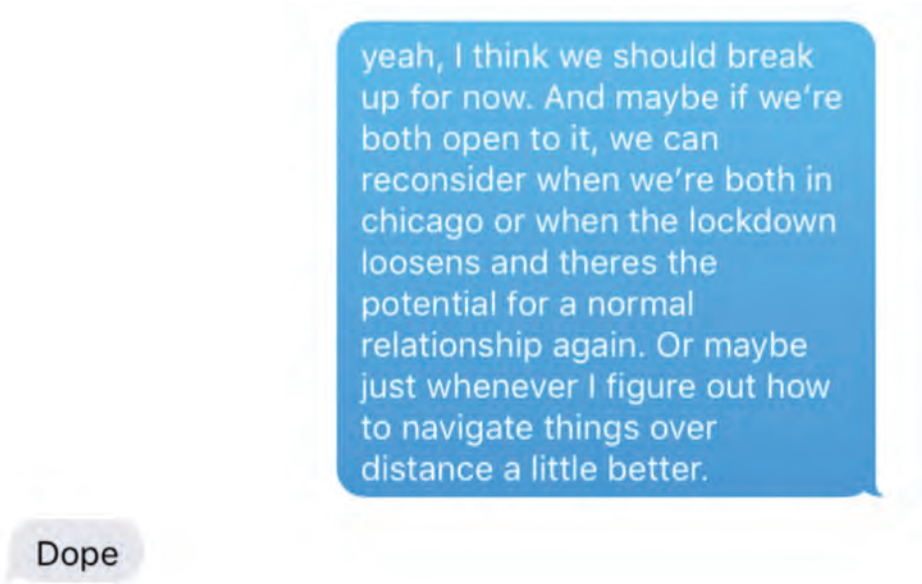
By Nathan W. Pyle



*Ibidem*

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## **QUARANTINE**



yeah, I think we should break up for now. And maybe if we're both open to it, we can reconsider when we're both in chicago or when the lockdown loosens and theres the potential for a normal relationship again. Or maybe just whenever I figure out how to navigate things over distance a little better.

Dope

—From “Document Your Spring Quarter” by Sage Rossman, Class of 2023